(e) the steps proposed to find new areas and new strains for coffee cultivation in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.VK.S ELANGOVAN) (a) No, Sir The Coffee Board has been striving to expand coffee growing areas and its production in the country

(b) Does not arise

(c) Yes, SirTo enhance coffee expansion and production in the North Eastern Region and non-traditional areas *viz* Andhra Pradesh and Onssa, the Board is implementing special area programme for the development of coffee in these areas

(d) No such instances has come to the notice of the Government of India/Coffee Board

(e) The Coffee Board is implementing Special Area Programme to expand coffee cultivation in new areas in all the seven states in North Eastern Region, Andhra Pradesh and Onssa Regarding production of new strains to improve production, the Board through its premier research institute *viz.* Central Coffee Research Institute has been continuously striving to develop improved plant materials in terms of better production, quality as also resistance to pest and disease over the past 6-7 decades The Board has a well equipped bio technology lab in Mysore, Karnataka, for developing improved plant strains through modern approaches like genetic engineering, marker breeding techniques etc.

Import of edible oil

t1560 SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL. Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state

(a) the details of import of edible oil, especially palm oil from abroad during the last five years,

(b) whether any concession has been granted in customs duty for the import of the said edible oil,

(c) if so, the logic of granting the said special concession.

(d) whether it is a fact that the imported palm oil has destroyed the indigenous edible oil industry and

(e) if so. the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) Details of Import of Edible Oils as well as Palm Oil during the last five years is given in the table below:

(Qty in tonnes)

S.I	No	Item	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
1				4177170	4321830	4365033	5290296
2				3054923	2733119	3052625	4026436

(Value in Rs. lakhs)

SI.	No	Item	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
1		Edible	8046054	597653.4	646496 9	877963.6	1168324.5
2		Oil Palm	5291609	4071526	375521 9	5892584	841842.1

(b) and (c) The Palm Oil falls under heading 1511 and Tariff rate on Palm Oils is 100% Crude Palm Oil and its fractions attract customs duty of 80% subject to actual user condition and Palm Oils other than Crude Palm Oil attract customs duty of 90% Customs duties on crude palm oil and its fractions was increased from 65% to 80% and Palm Oils other than crude palm oils from 75% to 90% *we f.* 15th February, 2005. These rates are quite high and can hardly be considered as concessional rates

(d) and (e) There has been a continuous excess of demand over domestic supply of edible oils, import of edible oils has been resorted to more than two decades to make this item of mass consumption easily available to consumers at reasonable prices As per extant EXIM Policy, import of edible oils except coconut oil is under Open General Licence (OGL) Import of Crude Vegetable Oils of edible grade including Crude Palm Oil not only entourages idle capacity utilization of the domestic Edible Oil Industry but also favours value addition in the country.

FDI in construction sector

1561 SHRIMATIAMBIKASONI
DR T SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is examining question of permitting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in construction sector and is holding wide-range consultations with various stakeholders;